

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISSION

ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

JULY 14 – 19, 2003

MISSION STATEMENT

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE MISSION

Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Market Access and Compliance, William Lash, and Assistant Secretary and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, Maria Cino, will lead a senior-level business development mission to Bucharest, Romania and Sofia, Bulgaria.

The focus of the mission will be to help U.S. companies explore business opportunities in Bulgaria and Romania. The delegation will include approximately 10-15 U.S.-based senior executives of small, medium and large U.S. firms representing, but not limited to, technology, equipment, and services in the following key growth sectors: automotive parts and services, construction equipment and building products, information technology, telecommunications, defense industry, energy, medical products, pollution control equipment and services, and tourism infrastructure.

II. COMMERCIAL SETTING FOR THE MISSION

Bulgaria: Bulgaria's commercial setting offers political stability, strong economic growth and stability, strategic location, and low costs. While the domestic market is relatively small, Bulgaria is an excellent launching pad for sales into the European Union, Russia, Turkey and the Middle East. However, despite the important improvements to the commercial climate over the past five years, Bulgaria is still a transition economy. Bulgaria is working hard to transform itself into a market economy and the Bulgarian Government is eager to attract the interest of American businesses. Internationally, Bulgaria has been invited to join NATO in 2004 and expects to be a member of the European Union in 2007. Bulgarians are eager to have greater access to American goods and services and there are excellent opportunities for those companies willing to enter and develop this emerging market.

Romania: With its population of 22 million and its strategic location in Southeast Europe, Romania is a key market for American technology and services. Three years of positive economic growth, an aggressive privatization program and its invitation last November to join NATO all point to a bright business outlook. The expanding private sector is favorably inclined toward American products and services. A massive restructuring of the energy sector, the privatization of the national oil company, the liberalization of the telecommunications sector and an ambitious highway modernization plan will provide opportunities for U.S. companies to participate in government procurement.

III. GOALS FOR THE MISSION

The mission will further both U.S. commercial policy objectives and advance specific business interests. It is intended to:

- Assist individual U.S. companies to pursue export and other new business opportunities in Bulgaria and Romania by introducing them to key host government decision-making officials and to potential business partners;
- Assist new-to-market firms to evaluate the market potential for their products and gain an understanding of how to operate successfully in Romania and Bulgaria's commercial environment; and
- Enhance the dialogue between government and industry on issues affecting the development of commercial relations.
- Promote the enlargement of U.S. and Romanian and Bulgarian trade and investment and, as a result, contribute to the political and economic stability of important American allies.
- Assist U.S. companies to take advantage of opportunities arising from NATO accession and market-economy status as determined by the Department of Commerce.

IV. SCENARIO FOR THE MISSION

The Business Development Mission will provide participants with exposure to high-level business and government contacts and an understanding of market trends and the commercial environment. American Embassy officials will provide a detailed briefing on the economic, commercial and political climate, and participants will receive individual counseling on their specific interests from U.S. Commercial Service industry specialists. Meetings will be arranged as appropriate with senior government officials and potential business partners. Representational events also will be organized to provide mission participants with opportunities to meet Bulgaria and Romania's business and government representatives, as well as U.S. business people living and working in Bulgaria and Romania.

The tentative trip itinerary will be as follows:

July 14th – Arrive in Bucharest

July 15th –Business Meetings

July 16th –Business Meetings in morning; travel to Sofia in afternoon

July 17th –Business Meetings

July 18th –Business Meetings

July 19th – Depart Sofia

V. CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION OF COMPANIES

The recruitment and selection of private sector participants for this mission will be conducted according to the "Statement of Policy Governing Department of Commerce-Overseas Trade Missions" established in March 1997. Promotion and recruitment will include, but not be limited to, posting on appropriate Department of Commerce web pages, notification in the Federal Register, and through distribution of the trade mission statement and further information to national and other trade associations and trade publications. Approximately 15 companies will be selected for the mission. Companies will be selected according to the criteria set out below.

Eligibility

Participating companies must be incorporated in the United States. A company is eligible to participate only if the products and/or services that it will promote (a) are manufactured or produced in the United States; or (b) if manufactured or produced outside the United States, are marketed under the name of a U.S. firm and have U.S. content representing at least 51 percent of the value of the finished good or service.

Selection Criteria

Companies will be selected for participation in the mission on the basis of:

- Consistency of company's goals with the scope and desired outcome of the mission as described herein;
- Relevance of a company's business and product line to market opportunities in Romania and Bulgaria;
- Seniority of the representative of the designated company;
- Past, present, or prospective international business activity;
- Diversity of company size, type, location, demographics, and traditional under-representation in business;
- Degree of company's commitment to corporate citizenship.

An applicant's partisan political activities (including political contributions) are irrelevant to the selection process.

VI. TIME FRAME FOR APPLICATIONS

Applications for the trade mission to Bulgaria and Romania will be made available on or about April 8, 2003. The fee to participate in the mission will be between \$2,000-\$4,000. Expenses for travel, lodging, and some meals will be the responsibility of each participant. For additional

information on the trade mission or to obtain an application, contact Raj Dheer. Applications should be submitted by May 9, 2003, in order to ensure sufficient time to obtain in-country appointments for applicants selected to participate in the mission. Applications received after that date will be considered only if space and scheduling constraints permit.

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